(177)

1933

8, Fitzroy Street,
W.1.
Museum 5596.

May 14

I have had no letter from you yet & whether this will ever reach you I don't know. However I must tell you that a bunch of the most delicious asparagus came - far nicer than any one can buy. I felt inclined to plant some myself but then we have to wait 3 years before we I went to Tavistock with my carpenter & I told the book shelves will be all right. They should be done some time this week. We found everything in a state of spring cleaning with Nelly wrapped up in dusters. I asked him about the working plans, but he agreed with your man. That the wall was not taken for anything to be done - but I wonder if some rearrangement of furniture could be made which would let me see the whole - When you come back (& come & give us views. But what ode you can

about took shelves & mirrors while you're
wandering about Siena. I wonder if you'll
go to Monte Oliveto where Roger & I once
spent a night or two with the monks -
I suppose you'll be able to drive anywhere
for a few hours & must have to spend
nights if you don't want to - It was
very uncomfortable I remember.
Who do you think I met the other day
at a party given by Eleanor Marshall in
her mother's house - A stout middle aged
gentleman whom I did not know came
came up to me & said "I must speak
to you because you are Vanessa &
I am - Desmond O'Brien" - You
could have knocked me down with a
feather - but once I'd been told I saw
that he had hardly changed at all -
He always looked stodgy & middle aged.
He can now talk of nothing but his family
especially his daughter Bridget who paints.
I asked about Connor & about Aubrey
which was tactless as he was killed in
one war as I ought to have known, but
I did not ask about Nancy whom I knew
to be dead, nor about Nelly who I believe
is dead too - He murmured something
about your writing being very interesting -
but he is entirely absorbed in his duties
as he is

(177 ii)

8, Fitzroy Street,
W.1.
Museum 5596.

I sent Kuno in Dublin I am sure what else has been happening. except that I had a visit from Dame Ethel who stopped in after her basket & made Miss Wendy sick & her mamma also come & visit me. Dame herself was with her sister each alone her knees & her legs wide apart & described the mating of her dog with a hitch several sizes too small in great detail It wasn't really very amusing but Wendy almost became hysterical.

I send you in a letter from Angelica which is far more interesting than any thing I can tell you. We dined last night with Colin Agnew at the Café Royal — his latest nice — one of those curious bachelors who lives with a valet & a housekeeper & is very greedy & comfortable. He lives at 65 South Audley St — surely Mrs Grimp's old home.

Duncan writes

to give a series of pic-nic parties in his studio. His method of asking people is to ask them to write down everything he can think of & put the names into a hat & draw 8 – but I doubt if it will work.

The Trips seem to be in such a whirl. Society that I hardly see them at all. Roger complains now that quite half the Telephone calls, which never stop, are for Helen. & yet he has to answer them – & he also complains that Bais holidays will now last half the year – but he's supposed to be a returned character.

It's pouring with rain. I fear the usual summer weather is setting in. Quentin says it's really hot in Spain. Think I the gloom & Sunday evening in London with all my cronies away. No one but the cat to keep me company & when I'm alone with the cat I'm always terribly nervous lest a mouse should appear. What should I do? Clive is at Seend. Duncan at Twickenham. The Trip at Rodwell. & yet at Seend perhaps. I deserve a letter but I don't get one.

Much VB

T. PARSONS 3-2-23

(178)

CHARLESTON.
FIRLE, LEWES.

July/Aug 1933

1933 ca 2

Sunday

My Billy
The furniture has all arrived safe & in good order. The chair is such that I hardly dare sit in it unless I know that I shant be left in peace for an hour or two — As for the bed you want me I suppose to become a confirmed invalid — but I hope you won't abuse me if for the moment I have put Quentin into it. His room was rather uncomfortable — & as it looks as though he'd have [illegible] in bed a long time yet it really does make a very great difference to him — In fact you couldn't have given anything if more use at the moment. & as soon as he's well enough I shall

take it for my cough – but it will I see change my life. The doctor came today with his patches from Leire & they took away a lot more liquid. They hope things will now improve but I think Dr Batters doesn't expect him to get right very quickly. He said pleurisy often lasted 6 weeks –

Roger is here at the moment, & doing quite active –

I hope your being sensible in this ~~heat~~ Don't have the Rayners [illegible] in your hot house. Bunny flew here yesterday & is staying at Tilton. His aeroplane lies in the back field.

I hope you will come over soon & perhaps I should for me to get out the map at present. Send a card when you can come & it will [illegible]

Love Vi

(179)
Ballet about Flora at Sadlers Wells
for Ninette de Valois

?1933

8, Fitzroy Street,
W.1.
Museum 5596. Dec. 25

My Billy.
You are an incorrigibly wicked
creature & deserve nothing but abuse - You
don't keep to your engagements - & then
button hunting. What is one
to do? I give you up as a bad job
& haven't a particle of affection left for
you - no not one - If you ever get a
screen in return it shall express my
venom & bitterest hatred - but at this
moment I am so frightfully glad back
from Scond I cannot revile you as
I would. We came back yesterday
after a visit in which I must admit
you acted & presented over the only
bright spot - I haven't time to tell
you all about it - but I am almost
become a communist - Really the
respectable rich with their dogs & their
clothes & their cars all rolling in while
they eat & play tennis & become athletic

are enough to make me want to vomit.
They eat & eat & eat & they feed their
dogs as carefully & their conversation
about dogs beats any maternal twaddle
I ever heard or else it consists of nay-
nay nay rather like Lottie at her worst.
Lorna is the worst of the lot - by
far. & if she is ever murdered by
her children no one, not even Mrs Bell
will be surprised. However you should
ask Angelica all about it - At least
I have sympathy now - for the Queenie
are quite aware of all that goes on.
He & I drove to Wells one day & left
them it all. Now we're back
in the thick of party preparations
& also of my ballet which all has to be
done within the next few days - so you
see I haven't much time for letters -
Hope you & the party went on -
Neither Sam nor Eddy W. have been
asked. There'll be no typical play time
games as far as I know - all sweet &
innocent as anything. I must stop & catch
the last post. My floor is covered with huge air-
balls, beautiful but likely to burst from VS

(180)

33 Via Nazionale

(1935)

June 14

I suppose you have settled down into such a whirlpool of excitements, human & intellectual that you won't give a thought to your poor relations leading a purely animal life in the South. Anyhow the only way of reminding you of their existence is to write to you. I read from Duncan that you had arrived safely, but he did not know what else you mattered to me, much more, whether the plots had. It is no use here now that you mustn't expect much coherent literary style from me - also I'm buried in Mrs Humphry Ward, the inventor of the cinema caption style, as I was saying. all dashes & notes of exclamation. I believe a fortune could be made by turning some of her works into films. But that won't interest you. I don't know what will. We've seen hardly a soul to speak to outside our own household. Duncan & I dined with Maurice Imelle one night & met only the Jebbs & the Jebbs are to dine with us tomorrow night - they leave for England the day after by car so that is the last we shall see of them - I am thinking of getting them to take back with them the rest of Roger's letters & posting them to you in London. As it is so difficult to send anything from here by post. I have finished reading them now & I daresay you'd rather read the whole

let straight through when you begin - Though perhaps they would seem to you much good. I don't know really what they're like. I see they may have very little interest for anyone but me. But you may get a sort of general vision out of them I wish you'd tell me whether you think it would matter letting Helen see the later ones, or do you think all the complaints of her children etc would be upsetting. I expect she may want to see them some day but of course I could keep some back. You can decide to what you like with them, but please keep them to yourself - as I have sent almost everything, however personal about me - I don't want anyone else to see them

Duncan has got a studio at the top of his house & has started work in his Queen Mary decorations - It will be an immense job & I see & I think he'll have great difficulty in getting it done in the time by Nov. 30th. He says he must stay in one place some time to do it, so he will I think stay here at any rate till the end of July, perhaps a little into August we, I think, shall either come back to England

(180 ii)

at the beginning of August or we might go for a little to Carisbrooke way. But anyhow I expect both Duncan & I must be back in England at latest early in September to do basic things. I have been given a room to do too. much smaller than his of course but it means doing a large panel & some doors & all the shutters, carpets etc. so I shan't have any too much time. So you won't be rid of us for ever you see & no doubt we shall have hard work to edge our way in again through the Colebrookes & other crowds. But I wonder you don't retire from them all - the chief of having no telephone, practically no engagements, only our own hours of work to arrange, is really immense. I suppose at Rodmell one is almost as bad as London with Shoreditches dying in

Your letter to Angelica has come so we are not altogether forgotten. & all the pots are safe but me - & Rodmell is much as I suppose. Well, next year I think of spending three months at Charleston, but not keep on the telephone I shall keep myself to myself. One day

when I was there you might look in upon Grace who might wearies about the beauty & wonder of her baby. but no. you were like such a display of maternal instinct. It might be interesting to see how it changes such a flighty creature

I've had a long letter from Helen who seems to be recovering from Marguerite Duthuit's visit but I expect she'll have Ba on her in a moment. Julian writes very seldom. Have you seen him at all? & Clive?

We're trying to work pots since you went but I hope before long we may hire a car & go for a few days to one of the places near where we may find some good modern pottery

Have you got a successor to Paula yet? I remember you thought you might to lay down me about a year ago - But this is the proper spirit in which to write. I really offer my condolences & regret that I never painted her portrait as I meant to.

Please write

Yours
B

Did the letters I gave you include a packet for 1923? (perhaps I have 1922?

33 Via Nazionale

Wed. June 25

1935

It sounds true as though all the letters had arrived. I meant to explain to you that the 1922 packet somehow got separated from the lot I gave you which it ought to have been in. I found it after words. But I can't understand their arriving so badly done up. I made up the parcel as strongly as I could, with a great deal of care. I gave it to the Jebbs who were motoring back & said they would post it to you in London. Then I heard from her that instead of doing this they had sent it by what they call the Embassy bag & that straight to the Embassy in London, which she thought quicker & safer, & they were going to post it to you. But someone somewhere must have opened it to see what was in it. It is a mad, mixed up description however if they're all there I suppose it's not worth making a fuss. It's unlikely that any individual letters would have been stolen & each year was in one packet. I'm sure you have written about it.

The next day after tea just as we were all in a very untidy state preparing to go out for an evening séance the bell

rang. Queenie opened the door & Duncan came rushing in & one I said Mr & Mrs George Booth are here - I took it as a joke naturally but then saw Uncle Kaley was serious - & in terror at the idea it might be true rushed & changed my ancient skippers for more respectable shoes. Hardly had I got them on when in actually came the George Booths. You could have knocked me down with a feather. It appears their daughter Polly is living here - in fact when we first came Angelica (you remember Mrs Kennedy at that concert?) I had no idea Miss Polly Booth was. It being a common name - but she had found out who Angelica was & brought them here - George was as usual very affectionate & polite. They only stayed a very short time & said they were going & ask us nicely happened we thought we must ask them & dined, we being the old inhabitants as it were. So we left a note in town yesterday morning to which so far we had no reply.. I suppose they're in your world a Booth more or less means nothing. But to us it has been a great event.

I long to hear all about your going to Bristol etc. It sounds like as though the Fry sisters meant to manage their affairs as wonderfully

can. I think they do have to come & see for help
in the end. Only hope they won't set up a show
of Roger Wood in London instead of doing Shaw who
knows something about it & help. It would be too
depressing. Probably the Bristol show will be an
awful botch-potch. As for the Q. I believe
Rogers will realize more & more that she cannot possibly
do anything herself & the more she hands things over
to you the better. After all you will be committed
to unity more than you want to in any case.
It is really petty not to see & me to adopt
the show made of the Romans & set anywhere.
I have just had a letter from Clive who want
all our plans (he writes) & a minute so
I must try & make me what they are. But
it's very complicated. All I know for certain
is that Duncan & I think I too, must be
back in London so as to be able to work in
the Queen Mary by the beginning of September.
I think we shall stay here another month
then go either to Cassis or Charleston for August,
& then Duncan & I shall return to Fitzroy St
& the rest of the family probably to Charleston
where we could join them for week ends.
But I'm rather appalled at the amount Duncan
has to get through. One of his panels is 18 feet
high

which is really immense - it has large groups of dancing figures in it. & then he has two others panels about 10ft high each. Also staffs, carpets etc for the whole room. My job of course is much less but even I have a lot to do & can't very well get started till I get back to London as I have no good light to work in here & not room enough at Cassis - besides it's being very difficult to start on a big job of that kind in the midst of family life. It's rather a bore - I hoped we needn't make any definite plans or hurry back particularly, but one can't avoid it. You no doubt too were hoping to feel comfortably quit of us till October at least. Well you needn't see me till then if you don't wish to. Do you want me to get you anything else before I leave Rome? Love between the rap marked Am. Nursing but only bourgeois stuff.

Our boys in on Thursday just as when you were here. So you see I have no news. But surely I deserve a letter soon?

Not - another dog? What kind? Sex?

Yours VS

1636 Mass.

which is really enormous - it has large groups of dancing figures in it. & then he has two other panels about 10ft high each. Also staffs, carpets etc for the whole room. My job of course is much less but even I have a lot to do & must very well get started this I get back to London as I have no good light to work in here & not room enough at Carrs - besides it's being very difficult to start on a big job of that kind in the midst of family life. It rather a bore - I hoped we needn't make any definite plans or hurry back particularly, but we can't avoid it. You no doubt too were hoping to feel comfortably quiet & cosy till October at least. Will you however see me this time if you don't wish to? Do you want me to get you anything else before I leave Rome? We went to the flea market this morning but only bought stuffs.

Our letters to one another were just as when you were here. So you see I have no news. But surely I deserve a letter soon?

Not another dog? What kind? Sex?

Yours VS

T. PARSONS 3.2.73